

Fear's Grip

By Christina Dixon

As we go through life, many times we find ourselves bound by the clutches of fear. When we've been overwhelmed by something we feel is beyond us, or bigger than we are, or maybe we've experienced a sudden break down in an area of our life where we've always felt confident, fear has the potential to shake up our whole sense of safety and well-being. We are disturbed by how quickly things can change without warning. After all, it feels like our world is crumbling underneath us. What do we do? How can we ever feel safe again?

When children experience these devastating times, it is wonderful to see how quickly they can recover when a loving parent embraces and comforts them while speaking words of loving concern. No harsh comments about being a wimp, no cynicism about how life is pain, or how crazy their fears are – just love and tender concern that says, “I understand, I know you're scared and I'm here for you. You're not alone.”

It's so amazing how loving concern can heal when we're afraid, even though others may not be able to stop the pain, or promise that nothing bad will ever happen again. But, when others care enough to show us their love when we feel most vulnerable, it has a way of keeping fear from becoming embedded in our spirit. How would the story of Chicken Little have ended if someone had simply comforted her? Maybe she would have discovered that getting hit in the head with an acorn is a natural possibility when walking under an oak tree in the woods that time of year.

Unfortunately in many cultures, to even admit that you are afraid is to invite ridicule from others. So, in an attempt to protect ourselves, many of us choose to wear masks to hide how we really feel inside. Consequently, fear begins to take up residence in our hearts and minds wreaking havoc and squeezing joy from our lives, all the while turning us into its prisoners.

But wait! Didn't our Heavenly Father say we could bring our fears and concerns to Him? Even better, didn't He give us a Comforter to dwell *in us*? There's no question that He did! He provided us with One who comforts during times when we are overwhelmed or caught off guard by life's suddenly tragic moments.

Anytime we are afraid, we can sit with our Father and receive the loving tender concern that heals. No - we won't get promises about how nothing bad will ever happen to us again. No - those who caused our pain (*if we didn't cause the pain ourselves*) will NOT be suddenly pulverized for messing with “Daddy's Boy or Girl”. But, we will be reassured of our place in Daddy's heart. As we experience His love for us, we feel safe in His arms. He won't ridicule or make fun of us. We are free to run to Him so we can receive the comfort that comes from knowing beyond a shadow of a doubt, that when we are afraid – He cares.

In spite of the hurt, in spite of the fear, we're not alone. And – because Daddy is there with us, fear's grip – is released.



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